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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/709,584	05/15/2004	Ivan E. Petkov	drygear2	3583
23217	7590	01/05/2006	EXAMINER	
GLENN L. WEBB P.O BOX 951 CONIFER, CO 80433			PELHAM, JOSEPH MOORE	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3742	
DATE MAILED: 01/05/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Tata

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/709,584	PETKOV ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Joseph M. Pelham	3742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 and 14-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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The Examiner acknowledges Applicant's submission of the amendment filed 10/20/05. Claims 1-12 and 14-18 are now pending.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-3 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR'408 in view of U.S. Pat. 5569401 (US'401).

The claims differ from FR'408 only in calling for a center panel in the compartment; however, US'401 discloses, at Figs. 2, 4, & 9, and col. 2, lines 34-56, a center panel 22 **comprising** a heating element 20 (20' or 20"). It would have been obvious to form a center panel in the case of FR'408, after the manner of US'401, to more efficiently heat the contents of the case when a plurality of items are placed therein, such as ski boots.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR'408 in view of US'401, as applied to claims 1-3 and 6 above, and further in view of US Pat. 2852861.

The claim differs from FR'408 in view of US'401 only in reciting moisture collection means. US'861 discloses, at Figs. 1 and 2, moisture collection means 20, 21 for a drying container. It would have been obvious to adapt the moisture collection means of US'861 to the warming/drying container of FR'408 in view of US'401, since the latter is used to warm and dry skiing equipment, and such means would control dripping and condensation.

Claims 9-11, 14, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR2521408 (FR'408) in view of US Pat. 3624346 (US'346).

Referring to Figs. 1-3, the abstract, and claim 3, FR'408 discloses a portable drying and heating system, including heating elements 6, 7 in the walls, AC and DC power accommodation 8-11 inherently requiring electrical conversion means, and two moisture vents 15.

FR'408 does not explicitly disclose a thermostat or an adjustable strap, noting however that FR'408 does disclose a strap without discussing adjustability.

US'346 discloses, at col. 3, lines 65-72, the use of a thermostat to control temperatures in a portable heated case for sports equipment. It would have been obvious to adapt the thermostat control means of US'346 to the heated case of FR'408 to enhance temperature control and versatility. Moreover, strap adjustability does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art; strap adjustability is obvious because it has long been conventional means to allow comfortable carrying by persons of various heights.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR'408 in view of US'346, as applied to claims 9-11, 14, and 17 above, and further in view of US Pat. 2852861.

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The claim differs from FR'408 in view of US'346 only in reciting moisture collection means. US'861 discloses, at Figs. 1 and 2, moisture collection means 20, 21 for a drying container. It would have been obvious to adapt the moisture collection means of US'861 to the warming/drying container of FR'408 in view of US'346, since the latter is used to warm and dry skiing equipment, and such means would control dripping and condensation.

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR'408 in view of US'346, as applied to claims 9-11, 14, and 17 above, and further in view of U.S. Pat. 2617012 (US'012).

The claims differ from FR'408 in view of US'346 only in calling for combined AC/DC battery power. However, US'012 discloses the use of exactly this in a sports equipment case. It would have been obvious to adapt the power supply means of US'012 to the case of FR'408 to allow use in diverse environments, with or without mains or automobile battery power.

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR'408 in view of US'401, as applied to claims 1-3 and 6 above, and further in view of US'346.

The claims differ from FR'408 in view of US'401 in calling for a thermostat; however, US'346 discloses, at col. 3, lines 65-72, the use of a thermostat to control temperatures in a portable heated case for sports equipment. It would have been obvious to adapt the thermostat control means of US'346 to the heated case of FR'408 in view of US'401 to enhance temperature control and versatility.

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR'408 in view of US'401, as applied to claims 1-3 and 6 above, and further in view of US'012.

The claims differ from FR'408 in view of US'401 in calling for combined AC/DC battery power. However, US'012 discloses the use of exactly this in a sports equipment case. It would have been obvious to adapt the power supply means of US'012 to the case of FR'408 in view of US'401 to allow use in diverse environments, as discussed above.

Alternative grounds of rejection

Claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 17, and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Pat. 2852861 (US'861) in view of U.S. Pat. 4927995 (US'995).

US'861 discloses a transportable drying container with air vents 15, 18 and a water retention device 20, 21 and a centrally located support member 22, 23.

The claims differ from US'861 only in calling for a heater in the center panel and thermostat control means. However, referring to Figs. 3-5, col. 3, lines 10-19, col. 4, lines 8-13, and col. 4, line 59, through col. 5, line 12, US'995 discloses a center panel 14, 22b, 22c **comprising** heating elements, and thermostat control means, and its

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appropriateness for use as a dryer. It would have been obvious to form a center panel of US'861, after the manner of US'995, to more efficiently dry the contents of wet items are placed therein, and to use thermostat control means to accurately control temperature.

Claims 9-11, 14, and 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over FR2521408 (FR'408) in view of US Pat. 3624346 (US'346).

Referring to Figs. 1-3, the abstract, and claim 3, FR'408 discloses a portable drying and heating system, including heating elements 6, 7 in the walls, AC and DC power accommodation 8-11 inherently requiring electrical conversion means, and two moisture vents 15.

FR'408 does not explicitly disclose a thermostat or an adjustable strap, noting however that FR'408 does disclose a strap without discussing adjustability.

US'346 discloses, at col. 3, lines 65-72, the use of a thermostat to control temperatures in a portable heated case for sports equipment. It would have been obvious to adapt the thermostat control means of US'346 to the heated case of FR'408 to enhance temperature control and versatility. Moreover, strap adjustability does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art; strap adjustability is obvious because it has long been conventional means to allow comfortable carrying by persons of various heights.

Claims 3, 7, 8, 11, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over US'861 in view of US'995, as applied to claims 1, 2, 4-6, 9, 10, 12, 14, and 18 above, and further in view of US'012.

The claims differ from US'861 in view of US'995 in calling for combined AC/DC battery power and a carrying strap with adjustable engagement points. However, US'012 discloses the use of combined AC/DC battery power in a sports equipment warming case, and handle carrying means. It would have been obvious to adapt the power supply means of US'012 to the case of US'861 in view of US'995 to allow use in diverse environments, with or without mains or automobile battery power. Moreover, the use of straps instead of handles has long been conventional and strap adjustability does not patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art; strap adjustability is obvious because it was well known means to allow comfortable carrying by persons of various heights.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 10/20/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant's asserts that US'471 uses thermostat control means to maintain temperature "at a minimum of 145 degrees Fahrenheit. It does not prevent the temperature from rising above a maximum temperature".. In fact a thermostat functions in exactly this way, by deactivating the heater when temperature rises above the set point temperature.

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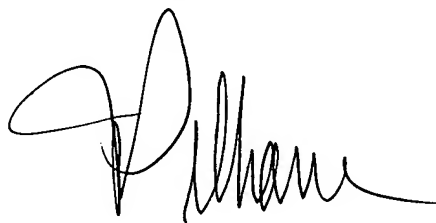
Applicant argues further that US'401 does not disclose a "heating element contained within a center panel." Yet the center panel can properly be defined to comprise elements 22 and the central portions of 20', 20"; likewise the center panel of US'995 applied in the new grounds of rejection.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph M Pelham whose telephone number is 571-272-4786. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

5/13/05

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Pelham', with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

JOSEPH PELHAM
PRIMARY EXAMINER